

EXHIBIT 1

DECLARATION OF RONALD BENSON

I, Ronald Benson, state and declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of 18, and I am a resident of the County of St. Louis City, Missouri.
2. I am currently homeless. I have no place to stay, and I usually sleep in a tent or outside in public places in St. Louis, Missouri. Many of the places I sleep are state-owned, public land.
3. Because I often sleep in state-owned land, public parks, sidewalks, or under bridges (including freeway bridges), I worry that I will be prosecuted under Section 67.2300, the new law that makes it a crime to sleep and camp on public land.
4. Any harms, risks, or fears of future prosecution in addition to criminal prosecution would be devastating. In addition to the emotional, physical, mental toll, and financial toll, it could affect my ability to enroll and be accepted in rental assistance programs in the future and obtain other public benefits. It could also affect my current employment or prospects of employment.
5. Shelters in this area are inadequate due to overcrowding, safety, or pre-requisites to being allowed into the shelter. Shelters in this area are often full as there is not enough space or the shelter does not let individuals in after a certain hour.
6. I have stayed at shelter in this area where it is notoriously unsafe. I've known of people being attacked and/or having their property stolen.
7. The availability of shelter, especially in the winter, is extremely unreliable. I have found it can vary wildly depending on something as simple as the weather.
8. I stay currently in a tent or temporary structure within the limits of St. Louis City and on public or state land as I have no other place to live. I am without a permanent, adequate, nighttime residence other than my current dwelling.
9. I am unemployed. I am also disabled. I served in the Army Airborne for 12 years. I have been homeless for over ten years, and I have lived in many different tent communities including Hopeville. Currently, I live in a tent on an isolated piece of land in the City of North St. Louis, Missouri.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the statements above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Executed on the 18 day of December, 2022, in St. Louis City, Missouri.

Ronald Benson
Print Name

Ronald J Benson
Signature